VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ

1862


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BY

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SONGS OF S. AUGUSTIN.

QUOD DEUS VULT.

Loud in the street tho' Wisdom cry,
  Tho' God himself be manifest
In human form to every eye,
  My wayward heart, thou questionest
    Quod Deus vult, quod Deus vult.

If, for thy sake, the Word of Life
  A crown of thorns endured to wear,
O curb thy lust of carnal strife,
  And do, and suffer, and forbear
    Quod Deus vult, quod Deus vult.

Hast thou not proved, in bygone years,
  That after-taste of bitterness
Which steeps forbidden joys in tears,
  And still art minded to transgress
    Quod Deus vult, quod Deus vult?

'Bear with me yet a little while,
  O make me pure, but not to-day:'—*
And can the Devil so beguile
  A lingering conscience to delay
    Quod Deus vult, quod Deus vult?

Two selves within me seem to strive
  In wild confusion of the will,
Be gracious, Lord, to keep alive
  My better purpose, and fulfil
    Quod Deus vult, quod Deus vult.

* Da mihi castitatem et continentiam, sed noli modo.—*S. Aug: Conf:* B. viii. C. 7.

The film of Intellectual Pride
  Before my sight disorder spreads,
Till Faith and Hope their guidance hide
  And under foot Presumption treads
    Quod Deus vult, quod Deus vult.

Didst Thou anoint my eyes with clay
  That, in the darkness, I might learn
To prize the spiritual ray
  By which alone can Man discern
    Quod Deus vult, quod Deus vult?

O blessed Hope, I see it now;
  I will arise and hasten home:—
Be Thou, Messiah, only Thou,
  My guide, my helper to become
    Quod Deus vult, quod Deus vult.

Uphold me on the weary road,
  Stretch forth Thy hand in power to save,
Till I put off my work-day load
  In Thy new Sabbath of the grave,
    Si Deus vult, si Deus vult.

O God, how perfect are Thy works,
In wisdom hast Thou made them all;
The wandering stream, the headlong fall,
The pool where glooming horror lurks.
Thine are the distant mountain-towers,
Thine are the myrtle and the yew,
The meadows with their swath of flowers,
The haze that mellows all the view.

This world without to Fancy lends
A reflex of the world within;
The careless walk, the plunge of sin,
The slough where stagnant pleasure ends.
What hopes the airy distance crown,
To tempt us onward to our doom!
What simple joys are trodden down
Between the bridal and the tomb!

SEEK THE LORD.

I sought Him in the breezy dawn,
  I sought Him in the glowing West,
On rugged Alp, on shaven lawn,
  In stormy seas, in seas at rest.
I listened to the song of birds,
  I questioned every tree and flower,
  From noon-tide to the midnight hour
I cried to Him in broken words.

In vain I search'd; on every side,
  In answer to my earnest cry,
The sky, the earth, the sea replied,
  'It is not I—it is not I.'
Air-note, bird music, waterfall,
  Wild landscape, garden trimly laid,
  In colour, sound, and perfume said,
'He made us all—He made us all.'

‘We are but creatures of His will,
A faint reflection of His face,
Condition’d by unerring skill
To suit the forms of Time and Space.
As in a glass with shadows dim,
If humbly thou desire to learn,
In us thy spirit may discern
What human thought can grasp of Him.’

So teaching, Nature in my soul
A hope before unfelt inspires,
Each several portion of the whole
A new significance acquires;
Till every sense and every thought
A round upon the ladder gains
Whereby love-hearten’d Faith attains
To Him whose Word such marvels wrought.

TIME AND SPACE.

O Time and Space, mysterious twins,
In whom Creation's self begins,
What art thou, Time, thou and thy sister, Space,
Who temper down to human sense
The one Eternal, one Immense,
With diadrom and scale for every plan we trace?

O Time, I feel thee what thou art,
Too weak such knowledge to impart
Mid wildering Æons past and Æons yet to be;
And looking forward, looking back,
'Whichever way thy waves I track
The still small Present aye appears confronting me.

In thee, O Space, when Reason tries
Thy secret law to analyze,
On either hand Immensity is found;
Thy constant greater, constant less,
Elude Conception's wildest guess,
The point whence they diverge alone is solid ground.

Dull-sighted mortals as we are
For what is near, the guiding Star
Of Faith directs us to another sphere:—
O may we take the lesson home,
Improving for the life to come
The ever-present Now, the one recurring Here.

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF LOVE.

Learn we from the wind that bloweth
North or South, or East or West,
As it listeth; no man knoweth
Whence it cometh, whither goeth,
Where its folded wing shall rest.

Even so the Holy Spirit
Cometh at His own sweet will,
Bringing gifts that we inherit
Purchased for us by the merit
Of a Christ who loves us still.

May our hearts with Faith receive him
  Coming late or coming soon,
We are helpless if we leave Him,
We are thankless if we grieve Him,
  Debtors for so great a boon.

Let not pride nor anger smother
  This commandment, ever new,
Given by our Lord and Brother:
Christians, love ye one another,
  Love, as I have loved you.

SONGS OF LUTHER.

THE PROTEST.

My heart is fixed, my will is firm,
  To leave the paths my nonage trod,
Within me stirs the quickened germ
  That yieldeth frankincense to God.

The mouths of babe and suckling call
  On Abba, with their earliest breath,
Whose love is over one and all
  To rescue them from sin and death.

No more shall idle tales debase
  My treasures in the Holy Book,
Nor cunning Priests usurp the place
  That Christ himself in mercy took.

They forged new chains for humankind,
But He would have us bend the knee
With such renewal of the mind
As maketh Man's obedience free.

They taught a pardon penance earns
While hearts remain unreconciled;
But God for our contrition yearns
As doth a father for his child.

They preached that fasting was a mean
To make the moral leper whole,
But while they kept the body lean
They made a starveling of the soul.

They said that gold was very dross,
But hugg'd their wealth in secret pride;
They worshipp'd fragments of a Cross
Whose full perfection they denied.

That Hell might grow and Satan thrive
They sold indulgences for sin;
But who would save his soul alive
Must crucify the lusts within.

God aiding me, I found the clue
To all this labyrinth of lies,
And, holding fast the Good and True,
Can walk with calm undazzled eyes.

THE VEIL OF FLESH.

When, in this world of change and flux,
The human mind inquires a cause,
And, climbing Reason's vantage, plucks
The topmost flower of Nature's laws;
Or, following back where Science guides,
Distinguishes, amid the swarm
Of Life in embryonic form,
The transient from what abides:

When taught the truth that underlies
Each phase thro' which Creation ran,
Till Order, System, Beauty rise
In gradual progress up to Man:
How must it turn, with mingled awe
And love and adoration stirr'd,
To Him whose omnipresent Word
Upholds the universal Law!

If every life that stagnates there
For Man be preface to his own,
And if within himself he bear
The quickening power in weakness sown;
If Instinct in each lower kind
For him to Reason's height ascend,
If sense in those be aim and end,
For him the instrument of Mind;

If he, from Nature's myriad birth,
Be singled out to represent
The great Idea—Moral Worth,
Self-conscious and self-reverent:
To God let praise and blessing rise,
Who bridged the chasm that separates
The Brute from Man, and bared the gates
Of Heaven itself to human eyes.

Breath'd as he was a living Soul
Through this corrupt material frame,
An inward essence, round and whole,
In outward act defective, lame,
Here Man must take his stand at last,
And, looking after and before,
Learn to interpret more and more
The pregnant future by the past.

Assured that when the husk drops off
The ripen'd seed shall never die,
That when he casts this mortal slough
He puts on immortality.
For Life is law not accident,
The lord of matter not the slave,
And, soaring from the body's grave,
Informs a purer element.

DEUT. XXX. 19.

God's Moral Law must have its due,
The same from all, that none complain,
And every pleasure, false or true,
Be purchased at the cost of pain.

The true with future blessing cheer
Self-sacrifice that goes before,
The false, pursued so madly here,
Involve a curse for evermore.

Then teach me, Lord, to love the good,
To seek my happiness therein;
O make Thy will my daily food
And wean me from the breast of sin.

So, when this Nature's debt is paid,
My other Nature shall be free,
No burden of remorse be laid
Upon my heritage in Thee.

SELF.

Fie on Fortune's gilded shows,—
  Can such tinsel win thy love?
  Hell beneath and Heaven above,—
What has Earth to interpose?

Check and balance, all thy days,
  Love of pleasure, dread of pain,
  Thirst and hunger, loss and gain,
Here of profit, there of praise.

Now the cup of mortal sin,
  Now the unatoning Cross,
  Pain of sense with pain of loss,
Bitterness of death within.

Genius muses, patience delves,
  Little value, heavy cost,
  Half their life and labour lost
In the shadow of themselves.

Where the open secret dwells
All are seeking, few can find,
Yet such coinage of the mind
A Divine Idea tells.

Time unlocks the fatal door,
See Eternity advance!
Make thy choice, no second chance,
Life or Death for evermore.

Past a thousand Zodiacs,
Sphered in elemental day,
Life too perfect for decay,
Sun too high for parallax.

Thither turn with single eye,
'Tis the home thy fancy dream'd,
Home of blessed souls redeem'd,
Would'st thou reach it, Self must die.

AUTO-DA-FÉ.

Though Saint and Sage this earth have trod,
Not John himself has dared pourtray
That truth which is our hope and stay,
The Personality of God.

The veil of flesh is on our eyes,
The weight of matter clogs our brain,
We grope in darkness, grope in pain
Through labyrinths of mysteries.

He leads us up from grace to grace,
To fit us for a loftier sphere,
His attributes are worshipp'd here,
But there we shall behold His face.

When Man, astray in ways of wrath,
Had come to hate Him as a foe,
He took the human form we know,
And woo'd us to a better path.

Of eyes too pure to look on sin,
He show'd us God as perfect love,
Reveal'd a home of joy above,
Where all who will may enter in.

He cannot sever sin from death,
Effect for ever linked to cause,
But when we seek His holy laws
Our hearts from sin He severeth.

By love to kindle love in me,
He put His state and glory off,
Endured the buffet and the scoff,
The crown of thorns, the shameful Tree.

Dear friend, though wise ones judge amiss
In mocking at our simple creed,
If it supply the help we need
What heart will vex itself for this?

Not every Pharos, builded high,
Declares a haven safe and true,
Too oft it warns the storm-tost crew
Of shoal or reef or quicksand nigh.

Our task to find, by crucial test,
The guidance star and moon impart,
To heave the lead, to scan the chart,
And steer for our appointed home.

A SONG

OF THE

CRYSTAL PALACE.

As flits a bird from spray to spray,
So through the air a winged thought
That scarce may light, that must not stay,
From heaven a message brought.
No rest in city, thorpe, or wold,
Till Windsor-towers their height uprear,
It enter'd there and, whispering, told
The secret in the Prince's ear.

By slow degrees a counter-thought,—
At first no wider than the flower
Its nurseling—by experience taught,
Became a sun-lit bower,
Where all rare plants had made their home,
Secure from frost and nipping breeze,
And vaster than Cathedral-dome
It over-topp'd old forest trees.

As warp and woof alternate blend
To paint the loom from marge to marge,
As arc and chord together send
A shaft that cleaves the targe;
So mingled thought and counter-thought
In dreams of splendour well defined,
And spake a word conviction fraught
Unto the hearts of all mankind.

It darted East, it darted West,
It flashed across to either Pole,
And ever bade a welcome guest
Where dwelt a living soul.
It lighted up the mine below,
Along the teeming earth it ran,
It search'd the Artist's studio,
The workshop of the Artisan.

Come, peaceful Envoy, hasten back,
More blessed than the Fiery-cross
That blazed on Scotia's battle-track
And streak'd the gory fosse;
It comes, with all things rich and new
To clothe the dream that haunts the Prince,
No riper project ever grew
From bloom to fruit, before or since.

Tier upon tier, in order due,
A thousand columns rear on high
A vaulted roof of glassy blue
Clear as the vernal sky.
Tall iron gates, emboss'd and crown'd,
Gates that might fold on Eden's realms,
To North and South the transept bound
Beneath the shade of branching elms.

Through crystal prisms and finest dews
The fountain-jets for ever shower
Their evanescent rainbow hues
O'er statue, palm and flower;
On either hand, adown the nave,
A long perspective of arcade,
Free-trade and peace their banners wave,
Of storied tapestry and brocade.

Here, fainting Ishmael madly prays
For cooling stream, for couch of moss,
There, Godefroi's iron hand displays
The standard of the Cross;
Death-wounded, here, the tiger sinks
Beneath Thalestris' trenchant glave,
There, meekly from her tyrant shrinks
The felon-freeman's girlish slave.

In distant halls, like things alive,
Steam monsters heave and clank and sigh,
Which here the Titan's hammer drive
And there the shuttle ply:
Strange force, subdued and tamed by Man,
It toils beneath the Victor's spell,
Sometimes a drudge like Caliban,
Sometimes a dainty Ariel.

In other corridors are ranged
All implements of husbandry,
That tell how men and times are changed
Since Corn-Laws ceased to be.
Old systems fall, new systems rise,
The new will thrive, the old decay,
Who now would win must earn the prize,
Monopoly has lived its day.

Here, flaunting through the general Mart,
Asthetic Superstition dons
The gauds of mediæval Art
To fix her wavering sons:
There, in a solitary nook
Religion tunes her sacred songs,
And gathers from the Holy Book,
For all men's weal, a Gift of Tongues.

Ah! how shall Fancy reckon o'er,
Or tongue describe, the treasure-pile
Around, above, from roof to floor,
In transept, nave and aisle.
The urns of Russian malachite,
The mass of Californian ore,
The gem of gems, most exquisite,
Great Aurungzebe's Koh-i-nor.

The gilded coach of civic pride,
The howdah and the palanquin,
The sleigh which northern maidens guide,
Befurr'd from foot to chin.
Goblet and flask and argent vase,
And shield of legendary gold,
Sevres porcelain, Bohemian glass,
Rich-tinted forms of perfect mould.

And here are shawls from far Cashmere,
And corals of the Arabian sea,
Bright flowers that bloom the livelong year,
To mock the honey-bee.
High tester'd beds, with scutcheon gay,
And sculptured thrones in order stand,
With buffets worthy to display
The marvels of Cellini's hand.

Such matchless hoards are here reveal'd,
And more to which the lavish earth,
From secret mine or open field,
In season giveth birth;
Whatever wealth from labour springs
Here in profuse abundance glows,
Its Poetry the Artist brings,
The Artisan its sober prose.

Morn from her pearly lattice flings
A smiling welcome to the world,
The peal from every steeple rings,
The banner floats unfurl'd.
Loud salvos of artillery greet
The opening of the month of May,
When, all at peace, the Nations meet
On England's noblest holiday.

With trumpets and heraldic state
The slow procession winds between
Lanes of the noble, fair, and great,
Who throng to meet their Queen:
Onward the slow procession flows
With halberdiers and silver helms,
To where a sylvan throne arose
Beneath the branching of the elms.

Ranged in mute circle round the throne
Were German Sage and restless Gaul,
Bush-bearded Turk and whisker'd Hun,
The Russ, sedate and tall;
And England's Primate, head revered,
Beside the Royal daïs stood,
In front the Prince himself appear'd
Encompass'd by the brave and good.

But after prayer and anthem-song,
The multitude, within, without,—
One voice, one mind—take up, prolong,
And echo back the shout.
The Prince has spoken the address,
Right gracious is the Queen's reply:
The shout is heard once more:—God bless
The Queen, the Prince, the Monarchy!

She leans upon the Prince's arm,
The gay procession forms anew,
Along the way her people swarm
With loyal hearts and true.
The task is done, the wreath is won,
Not idly sought nor lightly prized,
The shadow goes, the substance grows,
The Dream is more than realised.

MODEL COTTAGES.

All tissues have their rougher side,
  Conceal'd with care from prying eyes,
  For cloth of gold, like cloth of Frise,
Has thrums and selvages to hide.
And so, with labour and with trade,
  In this most money-getting land,
We over-prize the scheming head,
  And thrust from sight the horny hand.

Aye, working men, your strikes are vain,
  Routine pursues its dreary round,
  The wealthy grind, the poor are ground,
And what has been will be again;
Till law shall cease to over-rule
  The good that individuals plan,
And Parliament becomes a school
  To humanize the life of man.

But you must herd and pack, till then,
  Like farming stock or trading wares.
  Like cattle? Nay, what farmer dares
To make his byre a fever-den?
Like merchandise? To rot in sties
  His costly goods what merchant leaves?
And ye are more than all their store,
  Of dearer price than many beeves.

A stone-throw from the Palace gate,
  A stone-throw up the dusty road,
  A building stands, the meet abode
For honest labour and its mate.
Two decent homes, where man and wife
  May consecrate their married joys,
And maidens fence their modest life
  From ribald pranks of thoughtless boys.

A blessed thing it were, in truth,
  If cottages like these were seen
  In city lane, on village green,—
A blessed thing for age and youth.
O Woods and Forests, can you grudge
  The little plot whereon they stand,
That craftsmen as they homeward trudge
  May think they're cared for in the land?

Then spare them, Chief, whoe'er thou art,
  For record of a kingly soul,
  That while it plann'd a gorgeous whole,
Remember'd every humble part.
And worthier of him that builds
  Are maiden's thanks and matron's prayers
Than Comus feasts at civic guilds
  Or statue-schemes of rampant Mayors.

LEAH AND RACHEL.

I dreamt a maiden, beautiful and young,
  Went anxiously across a barren land
  In quest of flowers, and at her task she sung:
Know, all who would my earthly name demand,
  That I am Leah: day by day I weave
  The scanty gleanings of my patient hand,
If so a perfect crown I may achieve.
  But Rachel from the mirror seldom stirs,
  Communing with herself from morn to eve;
On her, on me, our Father's love confers
  Gifts different, but suitable to each,
  My life is action, contemplation hers.

DANTE. Purg. xxvii.

THE WORLD'S JUDGMENT.

Of wisdom, folly, virtues, faults,
The world its foregone verdict gives;
It judges blindly, as it lives,
And oftentimes its judgment halts.

It judges darkly, as it can:
The mysteries of soul and clay,
Whatever it may think or say,
Are deeper than the ken of man.

Our music jars: with fret and flaw
So many chords are out of tune;
But God will harmonize them soon
And bring them under perfect law.

And snatches of that holy strain
  Yield more contentment to the heart
  Than buzzings of the sordid mart,
Or praise that waits on worldly gain.

The flesh against the spirit strives;
  The will, distraught, in sunder flies;
  And here in truth the secret lies
Of all short-coming in our lives.

Till perseverance welds anew
  The springs of overtax'd desire,
  Which, temper'd in affliction's fire,
Work out the task they find to do.

Some live by Faith; the most by sight:
  The world, the busy world exults
  But in mechanical results,
And lauds the human zoophyte.

‘Do well unto thyself,’ it says:
‘For those who toil and those who spin
All honour and renown shall win,
Behold, the lilies have no praise.’

Out on the world! The lilies, too,
Are clothed in purity and grace,
Serve God in their appointed place,
And look with love on heaven’s face;—
Say, Father, say;—Is this not true?

THE CHEMISTRY OF MORAL LIFE.

When controversy swells the gale
  Till Faith and Hope are shaken reeds,
  Amid the clash of hostile creeds
That makes even Charity to fail,
I rest, in this conviction strong,
  Nor can I change it if I would,
  That every church has something good,
However churchmen do it wrong.

Consider Nature in her toil,
  That endless round without a halt,
  The plant that borrows scanty salt
And lime and phosphor from the soil;
Thus works for ever, day and night,
  The highest thought in human minds,
  And only in Religion finds
Its part of savour, strength and light.

But thrifty though the process be,
  Deep streams, that neither pause nor haste,
  Take up with care a daily waste
And bear it onward to the sea.
In morals, too, are like results
  By pure intelligences wrought,
  They store neglected germs of thought
And sift the husk of fading cults.

There comes to both, when time is ripe,
  A great upheaval of the lands,
  But Nature in her essence stands
Renewing still the ancient type,
While scattering shadows at a breath
  That seemed impervious to the storm,
  As that Etruscan's kingly form
Survived a thousand years of death.

Io veggio ben che giammai non si sazzia
Nostro 'ntelletto. . . . .
Nasce per quello, a guisa di rampollo,
Appie del ver il dubbio :— DANTE. Par. iv.

There are who seem to hate the single eye
That seeks for guidance unto God alway;
Who claim a privilege to overlay
His Truth with superstitious pedantry.
Arachne-wise, they wage unequal strife
With Wisdom's self: they dim the aperture
By which the Soul looks forth, and so obscure
The very fount of Spiritual Life.
Brain-spun perplexities of doubt and fear! [caught;
The strong break through them, but the weak are
The sceptic holds them scarcely worth a thought,
Or turns aside with ill dissembled sneer:
O for a Turk's-head broom to sweep away
Such cobwebs, and let in the light of day.

The dim and bounded intellect of man seldom prosperously adventures to be dogmatic about things that approach to infinite whether in vastness or littleness.

Boyle (at second hand).

Harsh dogmas oft the soundest judgments craze
Where knowledge halts: they warp the shafts of truth
To random flight, when meek persuasive ruth
Had wing'd them to the mark. O Athanase,
The maledictions of thy bitter creed
Quench weakling Faith and snap the bruised reed
Of Hope, that strives its drooping head to raise
And cries for succour in its utmost need.
Is, then, the soldier wiser than his Chief?
Can blind Presumption lead our steps aright
To wilful trespass on the Infinite?
Nay, let us rather share that convert's grief
Who sued to Christ, with tears, for clearer light:—
'Lord, I believe: help Thou my unbelief.'

Whom although to know be life, and joy to make mention of His name; yet our soundest knowledge is to know that we know Him not as indeed He is, neither can know Him, and our safest eloquence about Him is our silence.

HOOKER. Eccl: Pol: B. I. Ch. ii. § 3.

High wisdom with simplicity combined,
  Severest logic, built upon the Rock
  Of Truth, are thine, irrefragable Locke!
Systems and creeds are sifted and defined
Before the calm tribunal of thy mind, [wrought
  Whose code is God's own Word, and meshes
  By human craft to trammel human thought,
Like gossamers are scattered to the wind.
With thee, we seek our guide in Holy Writ;
  No crutch for pride or clue to mysteries,
  No Will-o-Wisp where sin in ambush lies,
But such a scheme as patient mother wit,
  With Spiritual aid, interpreteth
  Into a Law of Reasonable Faith.

Non e il mondan romor altro che un fiato
Di vento che or vien quinci ed or vien quindi,
E muta nome perche muta lato. DANTE. Purg. XI.

Faith, Understanding, Reason, wherefore these?
Let Reason grasp the helm and guide the prore,
While Understanding labours at the oar
And Faith makes sail to catch the favouring breeze.
All have their separate use, each aiding each,
But God the chart, the compass God prepares
Whose well-poised needle this inscription bears:
Be taught of Me, who would the haven reach.
O Lord, implant in us a humble mind:
Let not Presumption's wing be over-wide,
Nor Sloth, that sees the better, choose the worse,
Nor vain Opinion, fickle as the wind
That changes name because it changes side,
Pervert Thy blessed Gospel to a curse.

ENIGMA.

In summer heat and wintry cold,
  Now I burn and now I freeze;
Watching, like that Saint of old,
  Simeon, surnamed Stylites:
Lichen-freckled is my face,
Mildew festers at my base.

Keeping watch the livelong day,
  Guidance from above I seek,
Random-seeming sunbeams play,
  Flashing truth upon my cheek;
Past and future glow and fade
In alternate light and shade.

I have kinsmen in the hall,
  Grave, long winded, full of phlegm,
Most sententiously they drawl
  Every hour an apophthegm:
What goes right if we go wrong?
Is the burthen of their song.

Tiny cousins have I, too,
  Bosom-pets in every weather;
How they chatter as they go
  Four and twenty hours together!
Slippery little imps are they,
Scarce trustworthy for a day.

Then, my quaint long-waisted Aunt,—
Set her up on head or heels,
Try to ruffle her—you can't—
So indifferent she feels.
On she runs, unconscious dame,
Dribble, dribble, still the same.

Hermit-like, I love my joke,
Always keeping truth in sight,
When I give a gentle poke
'Tis to set my kinsfolk right:
Who are they, and who am I?
Can you guess my riddle? Try.

AN ANSWER

TO THE WELL KNOWN CHARADE:

'SIR HILLARY CHARGED AT AGINCOURT, &c.'

The Victor, scattering vanquished foes,
On the morrow shall have *los;*
The good Knight dead, from a gory bed
By his *ange* to Christ is led;
The Wife, made Widow on stricken field,
Hath but *losange* for her shield;
And '*Los, Ange!*' to Sir Hillary
Was prayer at once and battle-cry.

HILDEGARDE.

Is this the morning of your birth?
  Its dews are sleet, its breath is frost,
  The heavy clouds are piled and tost
By hands unseen about the earth.

O Hildegarde, on such a day
  I've scarcely heart to wish you joy:
  The Muse is cold, the Muse is coy,
She checks the words that I would say.

Noonward the day reluctant creeps;
And men seem walking to and fro,
Their footsteps muffled in the snow,
Like Phantoms when a sick man sleeps.

And, like those footsteps in the snow,
Strange, wayward fancies go and come,
My heart is seal'd, my thoughts are dumb,
I cannot speak the thing I know.

The evening hours at last appear:
They trim the lamp, the curtains close,
Make bright the fire, and as it glows
My sadness turns to better cheer.

For, truant memory, stealing back
To coverts of wild autumn-days,
Holds revel there, till all the maze
Breaks into glade and fairy track.

Once more the vintage-feast is gay
  With bachelors and blushing girls,
  The waltz goes round in giddy whirls,
And rustic courtship crowns the day.

Once more in flowery paths we walk,
  A student with his lady-love;
  We wander on from grove to grove,
And cheat the way with pleasant talk:

We seek the river's shady brink,
  To angle from the crazy boat,
  But dreamily we watch the float,
Scarce conscious if it swim or sink;

Now, soothed by some belated bee,
  Whose winter store is incomplete;
  Now, startled by the pattering feet
Of squirrels in the filbert-tree.

In Siren accents you recite
  The love-songs of our Father-land;—
  A pause: a blush: I take your hand,
And there a mutual troth we plight.

So, homeward to the dear old grange
  That I must leave at morning light,
  With vows that frost shall never blight,
Nor severance our hearts estrange.

But woman's vows are idle freaks
  By fancy nursed, forgotten soon,
  She changes with the changeful Moon,
Four phases in as many weeks.

I hear the organ-music roll
  Beneath the tall Cathedral-spire,
  And angel voices of the quire
To solemn thoughts attune the soul.

Alone I pace the cloister'd square,
God's Holy-Rood the centre keeps,
Meet shelter for a spirit that sleeps
And dreams of Resurrection there.

Dimly the lamp begins to burn:—
Ah! happy days, too quickly past!
Ah! sunny days, too bright too last,
And never, never to return!

So muse I, like a dreaming boy:
The clock strikes—One—the fire is low,
Your birthday ceased an hour ago,
I wake too late to wish you joy.

HAY-FEVER.

Treasures let my arm enzone,
Sitting by thee, Grace, alone,
Treasures richer than Potosi;
Smooth and full as nectarine
Is that dainty cheek of thine,
Smooth and full and rosy.

When thy dreamy glance awakes,
Dewy starlight on me breaks,
Starlight out of dewy lashes;
Fear not, lovers' eyes can meet
Harmless as in June, my sweet,
Summer lightning flashes.

Tendrils of thy glossy hair,
Parting, leave a shoulder bare,
  Tendrils of what vine are crisper?
In that ear's voluted pearl
Shall the giddy summons whirl;—
  Gracy, let me whisper.

Turn thee, turn thee, I would sip
Fragrance of thy parted lip,
  Fragrance, O beloved maiden,
Sweet as winds in haysel pass
Over melilot and grass
  With aroma laden.

LA REINE MARGOT.

With heaving breast and streaming eyes
Upon her couch Reine Margot lies:
  List! List! She hears the passing bell
    Reluctant toll.
Athwart her brain dark shadows course,
Her life-blood freezes at the source:
  'Ay me!' she sobs, 'it is the knell
    Of poor La Mole.'

'O noble head, so young to fall!
O heart, where I was all in all!
  Is this the end, is this the gain?
    A bloody goal!
My malison upon you lies,
Hard tyrant, by whose doom he dies!
  Vile slave, whose murderous axe hath slain
    My sweet La Mole!

What shall I do for thee, my love?
What guerdon my remorse shall prove?
A Queen's true lover shall be paid
No niggard's dole.
I read it here thy last request:
O Margot, let thy lips be press'd
Once, once to mine when I am dead,
Thy lost La Mole.'

At break of day, through many a street,
She sought the headsman's base retreat,
And there she kept her fatal tryst
With dead La Mole.
She washed the trunk, she washed the head,
And where he lay her mantle spread;
Then kneeling, lip to lip she kiss'd
Her own La Mole.

FRANCESCA DA RIMINI.

Whenas my Guide in order call'd to mind
  Those Knights and Dames by Love untimely slain,
  Like one astray, for grief and pity blind,
Faltering I spake: O Poet, I were fain
  That pair to question whirling side by side
  So helpless in the dismal hurricane.
They come anon, the Mantuan replied,
  If thou adjure them in the name of Love
  Mayhap thy longing will be satisfied.
Soon as the peopled blast to usward drove;
  Speak, thrall of Love, I cried, unhappy sprite,
  Unless forbidden by the powers above.
As doves, on sudden impulse of delight,
  Cleaving the air with outspread pinion strong,
  Make for their nest and leave the general flight,

They, parting from Queen Dido and her throng,
Athwart the whirlwind dropt to where we stood,
So potent is a sympathetic tongue.
O living Soul, who com'st, benignly good,
To visit us in this our torment-place,
Whose crime on earth is chronicled in blood,
If prayer of ours with God might merit grace
Thy day of life should be serenely blest
Who hast such pity on our evil case.
Ask at thy will, to what thou questionest
We listen, and reply at thy command,
The while the blast, as now, allows us rest.
We once were happy in our native land,
Where Po, with many a tributary stream,
Sinks down to peace on Adria's level strand.
Love, which in gentle natures reigns supreme,

Bound him to me in Beauty's rosy chains,
Soon forfeited—ah! spare the hateful theme.
Love, which kind hearts to love for love constrains,
So wrought in me to yield to his desire
That still my tortured soul the wish retains.
Love granted us to share a common pyre:
The curse of Cain is on our slayer's brow. [fire.
These words pierced through my brain, like searing
I hid my face, down drooping long and low,
To think what pangs these hapless souls befell,
Until my Guide exclaimed: Why musest thou?
My grief found words at last: Ah! who can tell
How many tender thoughts and hungry sighs
Have led them on to this eternal hell.
Then, turning to the pair, with streaming eyes,
I cried: Thy doom, Francesca, well may claim

Of earth a sympathy that heaven denies.
Yet tell me, in those days of maiden shame,
How Love devised an outlet to disclose
To each the other's unsuspected flame.
And she once more to me: The worst of woes
Is the remembrance of a happy time
In misery, and that thy Teacher knows.
Yet, would'st thou trace our error to its prime,
As one, who weeping owns and weeps to own,
I will declare how passion grew to crime.
We read together, in the sultry noon,
Of bold Sir Launcelot who loved so true,
Nor dreamt of wrong though we were all alone:
But eyes encounter'd eyes, suffused with dew,
A blush betrayed what modesty would hide,
One touch sufficed our virtue to subdue.

For when we read of fair Ginevra's pride
  To win so great a Knight to love's caress,
  He, whom may Fate keep ever at my side,
Dared on my mouth his trembling lip to press.
  The book, a Pandar's ambush, snared us both!
  That day we read no more;—

DANTE. Inf. V.

RUE.

Ophelia's random thought was true,
  Crazed fancy prank'd in common sense,
For many, many wear the rue,
  But wear it with a difference.

'Tis here Regret,—a poison-seed,
  Spontaneous in its overgrowth,
Self-sown, it spreads, a noxious weed,
  To rank maturity of sloth.

Repentance there,—a novel power,
  To turn the heart, to glad the face,
It bears a medicinal flower,
  O, well she named it: Herb of Grace.

Poor maiden, thou indeed wert crazed,
  Yet wiser in thy fond conceit,
Than wrangling sophists idly praised
  For cunning fence or wordy feat.

LINES

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF

TENNYSON'S 'IN MEMORIAM.'

O Alfred, in this jarring life,
With which no heart is quite at one,
Some happy phrase, some perfect tone,
Will quell, at times, the sordid strife

And dissipate the dull desire
Of lusts that war against the soul,
And cheer it onward to the goal
Of an existence purer, higher.

Dear is the covenanted bow,
  God's promise for the morrow-day,
  And bright the fabled milky-way
That sparkles down on frost and snow.

Bless'd was the sign to Israel given,
  That mystic ladder-path, whereon,
  Ascending and descending, shone
The angel-ministers of Heaven.

And dear as these, and bright and bless'd,
  (Less in degree, the same in kind)
  Are treasures of the Poet's mind
In lavish imagery express'd.

When sorrow gathers to a storm
  He paints an Iris on the gloom,
  His shuttle weaves in every loom
Colour on colour, form on form.

Crown'd with a wintry diadem
Of circling years, his golden mouth
Shall scatter freely, North and South,
A galaxy of pearl and gem.

His voice, sweet Singer, day by day,
Shall be a fine connecting-link
Of Faith and Hope with all that think,
Of Charity with all that pray.

THE PHANTOM BRIDE.

(Rationalism.)

"Why dost thou linger on the sands,
Alone in gloom, alone in woe,
And strain thy sight and wring thy hands
To watch the sea at ebb and flow?"

"A fair companion once I had,
She loved me not, but I loved her,
Her hollow smile would make me glad,
Her sigh had power my grief to stir.

She dwelt within an upland glade,
Her arm was pillow'd on an urn,
From which, through chequer'd sun and shade,
Sweet-cadenced fell a mountain-burn.

The throbbing air with music rang,
My heart was music to the brim,
When every voice her glory sang
Could I forbear to swell the hymn?

I knelt to her beside the burn
That onward bore my whisper'd vow,
She dipp'd a finger in the urn
And set her mark upon my brow.

With that, in her's my hand she took:
She led me forth; the air was still;
No sound the listening silence shook
But murmurs of her sacred rill.

We follow'd where its waters led,
I gather'd flowers along the banks
To make a chaplet for her head,
And wonder'd that she grudged me thanks.

I sang to her my sweetest song,
To her my pearl of pearls I gave;
Ah! sure, I thought, she does me wrong
To be so passionless and cold.

We pass'd a crowd, a gaping crowd,
Where every finger darted scorn;
As one they cried: 'The Phantom Bride!
'Tis pity, fool, that thou wert born.'

Adown a rocky pass we fared,
With human skulls in every cleft;
On her their empty sockets glared,
The breeze moan'd thro' them, right and left:—

'For her my life-long hopes were wreck'd'—
'For her my bones lie mouldering here'—
'She starved my soul with cold neglect'—
'She stabb'd me with a cruel sneer.'

My heart within me turn'd to stone;
I look'd upon her face again;
And lo! my cherish'd flowers are gone,
The wither'd stalks alone remain.

Again I sang, but she was ice,
She thaw'd not to the feeble charm,
And what I reckon'd pearls of price
Were mock'd at on her careless arm.

Without a sigh, without a smile,
She left me on this barren shore;
The sun shines bright on yonder isle,
Come, shroud and coffin, drift me o'er."

THE SUNNY ISLE.

(Revelation.)

"Long time I waited on the beach,
While day went round from East to West,
And yearn'd that sunny isle to reach,
To flee away and be at rest.

I fell asleep, and, dreaming, hail'd
Twin brethren in a fisher's bark,
Who cast their nets and sang and sail'd
In lambent phosphor through the dark.

To catch their far-off chaunt I strove,
It seemed a carol of my youth;
At last I held it: Truth in Love;—
And then the answer: Love in Truth.

I hail'd again; the shallop near'd
  And lay beside my rocky ledge;
They took me off, and seaward steer'd
  To where, upon the horizon's edge,

The home of all my wishes gleam'd;
  And, as we went, their faces shone,
My mariners transfigured seem'd;
  The songs they sang, in every tone,

Were echoes of another voice,
  The gladdest ever heard on earth,
Of Him who bade mankind rejoice
  In promise of the second birth.

They landed me when morning broke,
  And then my pilots sail'd again:
O bliss to find, when I awoke,
  Tho' sleep had flown, my dream remain!

Lo! trooping down upon the strand,
  The dwellers of the island throng,
They range themselves on either hand,
  To bid me welcome in their song:

'O thou, that like a lamb astray,
  Art brought again within the fold,
We greet thy dear return to-day
  With welcome joyful as of old.

Yet grieve no more the Blessed Son,
  Whose yoke is light, whose chiding mild,
Remember, Paradise is won
  In likeness to a little child.'

But who comes forth between the bands?
  O strange, it is my Phantom Bride!
She lays in mine her loving hands,
  And gently whispers at my side:

'God blames not him who stands aloof,
And patiently the clue unwinds;
The marvels some receive as proof
Do but entangle other minds.

Though mist obscure what wisdom taught,
Thou shalt not murmur nor despond,
For through the scud of human thought
Thou see'st the depths of Heaven beyond.

Look outwards, upwards; every need
Is filled with plenty from above:
In Faith and Hope be sown the seed
Whose harvest is abounding Love.' "

One bard, O Hope, may sing thy praise,
  And thine, delusive Memory, one:
At other shrines my voice I raise,—
  Content and wise Oblivion.
Be theirs the Future and the Past,
  To use the Present I would learn;
Their idols here in time are cast,
  But what I worship is Eterne.

Though Memory ring with pleasant chimes,
  Her muffled bells in grief are wild;
And Disappointment oftentimes
  Is left by Hope an orphan-child.
To me, Content, thy narrow field
  Were richer than the Monarch's realm,
Might wise Oblivion be my shield
  From woes that else would overwhelm.

A PORTRAIT.

From infancy to youth, from youth to age,
  Guileless himself, to guile in others blind,
A soul apart he seem'd, a noble page
  Amid the baser records of mankind.

For Truth alone, a zealous advocate,
  He proved the temper of opponents' swords,
But held an even balance in debate,
  Nor cared to triumph in a war of words.

Slow to condemn, in kindlier office quick,
  He strove to humanize the churlish boor;
He brought relief and comfort to the sick,
  Instruction to the children of the poor.

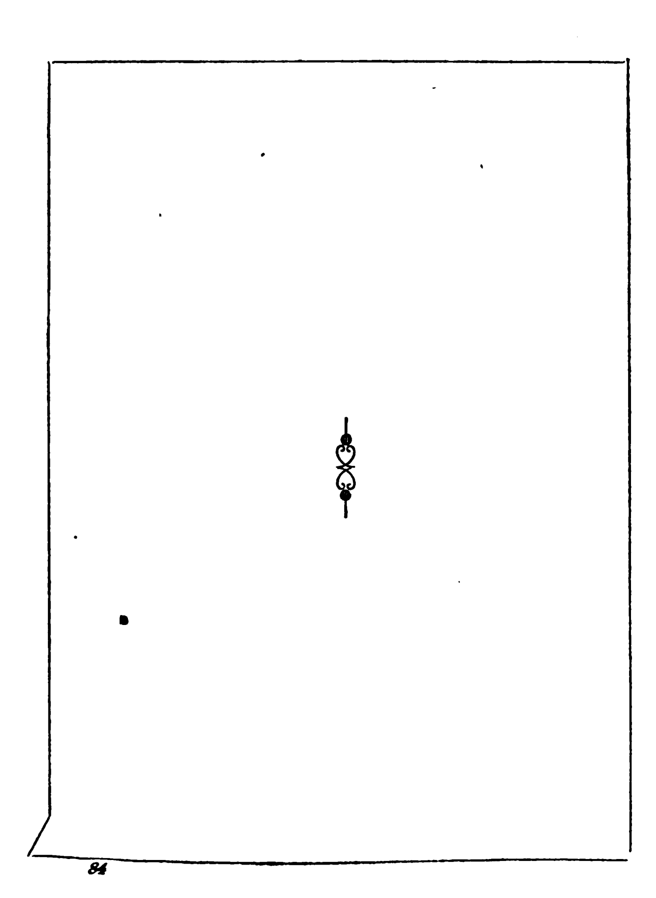
Above the world, its censure or its praise,
  Its selfish vanities and party strife,
In perfect sequence of harmonious days
  He wrought the Drama of a good man's life.

FROM BÉRANGER.

On the wide world flung,
  Poor, ill-favour'd wight;
Smother'd in the throng
  For my want of height;

Came a plaintive sigh,
  One appealing word:—
'Sing,' was God's reply,
  'Sing, my little bird.'

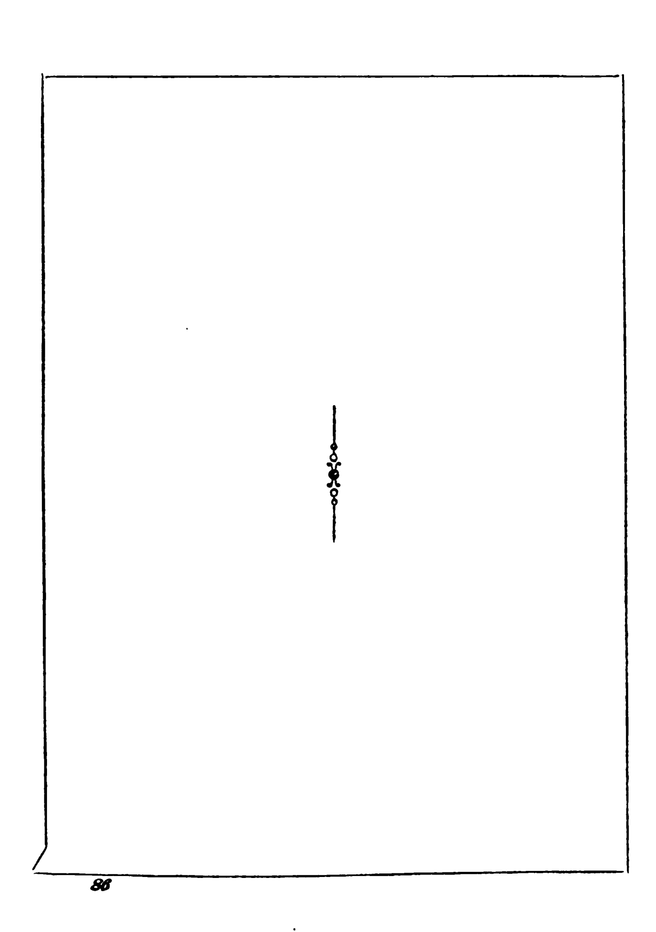
Such, or I am wrong,
  Is my earthly task;
Ye who hear my song
  Grant the love I ask.



FOUR AND TWENTY ODES

OF

HORACE.



BOOK I. O. 4.

Now Spring with gentle gales
over wintry cold prevails
And the capstan warps the bark to the sea;
The cattle quit their byre
and the husbandmen their fire
As the hoar-frost melts away from the lea.
Beneath Diana's glance
Cytherea leads the dance,
Nymphs and Graces pairing off in the maze;
And deep in Ætna's gorge
toil the Cyclops at their forge,
While Vulcan keeps the furnace in a blaze.

Now the myrtle-wreath around
every shining head be bound,
Or the flower in the earth lately hid;
And to Faunus in the shade
let our offering be made,
Be 't of lamb or more acceptable kid.
Pale Death with equal foot
crushes down the peasant's hut,
And the palaces of Kings. O my friend,
Away with scheme and plan,
when our life is but a span,
Like spectres of the night we must end
In Pluto's narrow home,
whither, Sextius, if thou come,
Cast of die names no lord of the wine,
Nor Lycidas is there
to bid our jealous youth despair,
When the maidens for his love 'gin to pine.

BOOK I. O. 5.

What stripling, Pyrrha, lavish of perfume,
Enraptured woos thee, mid the rosy bloom
Of thy delicious grot?
For whom that braided knot,
That dress without a crease? How oft the youth
Shall weep thy alter'd mood and lack of truth,
Shall dread, when storms arise,
The fury of thine eyes!
He hugs the counterfeit as real gold,
And hopes, vain hope, the favouring breeze will hold,
He ever welcome, thou
Serenely kind as now.
Fond dupe, whom specious calm to shipwreck leads!
Long since, on Neptune's wall my draggled weeds
And votive scroll record
The power of ocean's lord.

BOOK I. O. 9.

See, Thaliarch, how deep in snow
  Soracte stands, the labouring woods
  Bend with their load, and wintry floods
Benumb'd with frost, forget to flow.

Heap log on log the spell to thaw:
  Shall winter's frown our banquet mar,
  Or from thy raciest Sabine jar
Brimful the generous magnum draw?

Commit the rest to Jove's high hand:
  At the first bidding of whose will
  The wave and brawling wind are still,
Erect the ash and cypress stand.

Why, curious, turn the morrow's page?
  Set down as gain whatever chance
  The day affords; enjoy the dance,
Make love; full soon will peevish age

Put such toys by. Now let us go
  Where open square and public walk
  Buzz all around with whisper'd talk,
And sighs at night-fall breathing low;

Thence track the scarce-reluctant maid
  By laughter to her form, and snatch
  From arm or hand the ring to match,
Whereon sweet forfeit must be paid.

BOOK I. O. 16.

Most beauteous of a beauteous line,
Use as thou wilt my wrathful strain,
Purge out with fire its rash disdain
Or cast it forth on Hadria's brine.

Not Cybele's mysterious rites,
Nor God revealed in Pythian shrine,
Not Bacchus drowning all in wine,
So madden priest and acolytes,

As angry passions; forth they break
Fearless alike of Noric steel,
Of flames and wreck, of crashing peal,
Though Jove himself in thunder wake.

For when Prometheus first began
To fashion clay, he took with care
Of every living thing a share,
And gave the lion's heart to Man.

There burns the fire of rage and lust
That ruin on Thyestes brings,
There breed the strifes of rival kings
That, razing cities to the dust,

Plough up their streets. I, too, have known
The inconsiderate heats of youth,
Have storm'd and raved in phrase uncouth,
Here, at thy feet, the fault I own.

Be merciful: let bygone feud
Make reconcilement doubly sure;
My vile reproaches I abjure,
So be our pact of love renew'd.

BOOK I. O. 23.

Thou shunn'st me, Chloe, like the timid fawn,
That cowers beside her parent hind,
If but a bramble on the upland lawn
Sway towards her in the wind.

When buds of spring unfold, her little heart
Is all a-tremble if a leaflet shake,
And should a lizard from his ambush dart
Her knees for terror quake.

No tiger's cub, no lion's whelp I am,
To harm thee, dear, in limb or face,
I would but wean thee, timely, from thy dam,
Now ripe for man's embrace.

BOOK I. O. 27.

Let Thracians wrangle in their cups,
From mirth divorcing peace. Away
Such wild excess and bloody fray
The while our modest Liber sups.

With lamps and wine unseemly blends
The flash of Median steel. Refrain
This foolish noise, and sink again
Your elbows in the couch, my friends.

How! must I revel with the rest?
First, brother of Megilla, say
What love has stolen thy heart away,
What arrow rankles in thy breast.

Thou wilt not? nay, nor will I drink:
   Whatever beauty sways thee now
   No need to wear a blushing brow,
No need for honest love to shrink

From faithful ears. Come, breathe her name,
   In confidence.—Unhappy boy,
   Is that Charybdis all thy joy,
Thine, worthy of a better flame?

What worker of Thessalian charms,
   What witch, what god shall set thee free?
   Scarce Pegasus may rescue thee
From that triform Chimæra's arms.

BOOK II. O. 3.

In time of crisis learn to hold
  A constant mind: if good befall,
My Dellius, be not over bold
  To vaunt thy joy; death ends it all,

Whether thy life in sadness droop,
  Or on sequester'd lawn supine,
The feast-day through, thou drain a stoop,
  The choicest, of Falernian wine.

Why leave the hospitable shade
  By poplar cast and spreading pine,
Whence, hurrying on from grove to glade,
  The windings of the river shine?

Bring wine and oil; our sylvan fare
With roses, short lived roses, wreathe,
While yet the three weird sisters spare
The life of health and wealth we breathe.

Soon must thou leave these purchased lands,
Thy rural home by Tiber laved,
And soon must pass to other hands
The hoards of gold thy prudence saved.

The noble perish with the base;
Impartial Orcus cares no more
For Inachus' time-honour'd race
Than for the beggars at their door.

One drove, one road: for all in turn,
To-day, to-morrow it may be,
Their lots in issuing from the urn
Eternal banishment decree.

BOOK II. O. 8.

Barine, could false oaths avail
To bring thee under mulct or pain,
Were 't but a speck on tooth or nail,
I might be fool'd again.

But perjury sits well on thee,
Who art so daintily forsworn
That all the youth of Rome agree
To court thy saucy scorn.

What though thy mother's ashes cry
Against such wanton breach of troth,
Though every cluster in the sky
And every god be wroth;

Yet Venus at the treason laugh'd,
  And all her Nymphs enjoy'd the fun,
While Love, the wag, reset his shaft
    Upon the grindle-stone.

For thee a crowd of striplings grow,
  New food for thy caprice, before
Their slavish predecessors go,
    Old grumblers, from the door.

The mother dreads thee for her boy;
  The gray-beard for his gold; the bride
Lest hollow blandishments decoy
    Her husband to thy side.

BOOK II. O. 10.

Licinius, woulds't thou prosper more,
Tempt not the wild mid-ocean's roar,
Nor hug too close the treacherous shore
For fear of squalls.

He, who pursues the golden mean,
Cares little, so his hearth be clean,
For all the wealth and envied sheen
Of princely halls.

Tall pines the first in tempest bend,
Proud towers in utter downfall end,
And forked lightnings first descend
On loftiest height.

Brave hearts with good are not elate,
Nor overwhelm'd by evil fate.
One Jove, who raiseth, can abate
The whirlwind's might.

We sow to-day the morrow's fruit;
Not always doth Apollo shoot,
But just as often strike the lute
And tune the song.

To adverse fortune never quail:
Yet prudence bids thee shorten sail,
For even a favourable gale
May blow too strong.

BOOK II. O. 11.

Cease, my Hirpinus, to inquire
  What feuds are rife in wild Biscay,
  What plots in Scythia, far away
Beyond the Hadrian; nor desire

The wealth that breeds superfluous care.
  Will youth endure or beauty keep,
  Or must light love and lighter sleep
Give place to age and hoary hair?

The flowers of spring soon lose their bloom,
  The crescent moon but fills to wane;
  Disquiet not thyself in vain
To sound the dark abyss of doom.

Come, whilst we may, on this green sward,
  Where shady trees invite repose,
  Our grayness covered with the rose
And perfumed with Assyrian nard,

Let's drink! The jolly god shall laugh
  Our cares away. Who, boys, can chill
  Most deftly in yon gurgling rill
The fire from out the wine we quaff?

Who first can summon from her home
  That fickle wanton, Lyde fair?
  With ivory lute and knotted hair
Of Spartan fashion, bid her come.

BOOK II. O. 12.

Thou would'st not bid my Muse recal
The memory of Numantia's fall,
Of Hannibal, or of Sicilia's flood
Crimson'd with Punic blood;

Nor how the Lapithæ o'erthrew
Hylæus and his drunken crew,
How Hercules the race of giants quell'd
Who in old days rebell'd

'Gainst Saturn's house: then, tell in prose,
Mæcenas, the triumphal close
Of Cæsar's wars, proud kings in sad array
Dragg'd up the Sacred Way.

So shall my harp be free to raise
A song in dame Lycimnia's praise,
Her eyes, twin lamps of love, her faithful breast
In mutual troth at rest;

The lightest foot in all the dance,
In jest or play the archest glance,
The whitest arm when girls in cluster twine
About Diana's shrine.

One lock of sweet Lycimnia's hair
Is more to thee, beyond compare,
Than all the wealth of Persia's ancient lord,
Or Arab chieftain's hoard.

Ah! how she writhes her supple neck
To meet the lip she seems to check,
Or keen to grant as thou to claim the bliss
Mayhap forestalls thy kiss.

BOOK II. O. 15.

Soon scarce an acre will remain
  In tilth, if palace-builders make
  Their fish-ponds wide as Lucrine lake;
Soon will the unconnubial plane

Supplant the elm; the myrtle, there,
  With violets breathing perfume round
  Will overspread the olive-ground
That once enriched the rustic heir;

Here, will the laurel closely trail'd
  Exclude the sun. It was not thus
  From Cato back to Romulus,
While good old rules of life prevail'd.

Then, private gains were little worth,
The commonwealth was all their pride,
Nor did verandahs ten feet wide
Suck breezes from the shady North;

The cot was roof'd with natural sods,
By law prescribed for every one,
But sumptuous piles of quarried stone
Were courts and temples of the Gods.

BOOK III. O. 7.

Weep not, Asteria, weep no more,
Spring's earliest Zephyr shall restore
Your Gyges, true and sound at heart,
Rich from Bithynia's mart.

By South-winds on Epirus driven,
When frosty Capra binds the heaven,
He shivers all the long night through,
And shivering weeps for you.

His hostess sends her go-between,
Who leaves no art untried, I ween,
To melt his soul to Chloë's sighs
And win from you the prize.

She tells how Prætus' guilty bride
The chaste Bellerophon belied,
And sent him forth to death or shame,
To vindicate her fame.

How dearly Peleus rued the day
He slighted fierce Hippolyta;
  Raking in scandal's prurient lap
    For vice to bait the trap.

In vain. Icarian rocks have ears
Less deaf that he. Have you no fears
  Of wild Enipeus? Lest you care
    Too much for him, beware!

No horseman in our public rides
So well the managed courser guides,
  From Tiber's source to Tuscán sea
    No swimmer strong as he.

Keep close at dusk; and bar the door
When pipe or song one look implore,
  And though he call you hard and cold
    Your coigne of vantage hold.

BOOK III. O. 9.

When I was dear to thee,
Ere other arms than mine were free
About thy neck to cling,
More blest was I than Persia's king.

When I was all in all,
Ere Chloë rose on Lydia's fall,
Thy Lydia's envied name
Paled not at Roman Ilia's fame.

Now Chloë reigns supreme,
With harp attuned to loving theme,
For whom I fear not death
So fate would keep alive her breath.

The fire of mutual bliss
  Consumes me and my Calaïs;
For whom two deaths were joy
  So fate would keep alive my boy.

What, if the old love awoke
  Recoupling us in Venus' yoke?
If Chloë's reign were o'er
  And Lydia found an open door?

Were he like Hesper fix'd,
  Thou light as cork, and sooner vex'd
Than Hadria's fretful sea,
  Come life, come death, I'll dote on thee.

BOOK III. O. 13.

Bandusian Fountain, crystal-bright,
  With duly offer'd flowers and wine
  To-morrow shall a kid be thine,
Whose front, with sprouting horns bedight,
Foretokens love and battle-shock;
  Vain token; for thy chilling flood
  Must take the crimson of his blood,
Young promise of the wanton flock.
In sultry dog-day's hottest noon,
  Unsunn'd, a cool repose art thou
  To oxen from the toilsome plough,
To wandering sheep a welcome boon.
Henceforth run on, patrician spring,
  Made noble by my verse, that gave
  To fame that ilex-shelter'd cave
Whereon thy babbling waters ring.

BOOK III. O. 12.

Pity 'tis that loving woman
must devour her heart in secret,
Dare not steep in wine her sorrow,
lest a guardian's reproaches
Make her very life a burthen.
Citherea's winged urchin
steals thy basket, Neobulë,
Liparæan Hebrus' beauty
comes between thee and the canvas
Due to notable Minerva.

Glossy-shoulder'd, fresh from Tiber,
not Bellerophon so graceful,
When he backs the fiery courser,
he, the champion of the cestus,
Ever foremost in the foot-race.
Who like Hebrus, in the open,
when the startled herd are flying,
Singles out the tallest antler,
who so deftly snares the wild boar,
Lurking in the osier covert?

BOOK III. O. 15.

Thou poor man's ever-gadding wife,
  Whose sensual, shameless heart is still a-crave
With wantonness of youthful life,
  Why, Chloris, why, with one foot in the grave,
Desire in hoyden games to whirl,
  And cloudlike blot a starry galaxy?
What may be pardon'd in the girl
  Is loathsome in her dam; let Pholoë
Advance, with beat of tambourin,
  Bacchante-like, upon her paramours;
With frisk and gambol let her win
  A glance from Nothus whom she so adores:
Old crone, go to; Luceria's plain
  Hath fleeces for thy wrinkled hands to tease,
Forswear the harp, from flowers abstain,
  Nor drink the wine of pleasure to the lees.

BOOK III. O. 16.

The tower of brass, the oaken door,
All night the sullen watch-dog's bay:—
Could forethought strengthen Danaë more
To keep foul rape away?

But Jove and Venus only smiled
At poor Acrisius' care and pain,
The God came down upon his child
Dissolved in golden rain.

Gold wins it way through fence and guard,
Like lightning shatters walls of proof,
Corrupt with treason's base reward
The Argive augur's roof,

In ruin sank; wise Philip's gold
Took cities, vanquish'd rival kings;
Great fleets with gold are bought and sold,
Oh! bribes are tempting things!

If growing wealth breed thirst for more,
Mæcenas, flower of Roman knights,
My humble aim shall never soar
To Fortune's giddy heights.

The more a man denies himself,
The more Heaven gives him. I abjure
The fierce pursuit of worldly pelf,
In competence secure.

More happy in my frugal state
Than if I dared, with greedy stealth,
Apulia's harvest to regrate,
Poor in the midst of wealth.

My sparkling stream, my little copse,
With trust in Heaven to bless my store,
Were Egypt mine with all her crops,
I could not love her more.

No honey of Calabrian bees,
Nor ripen'd wine in Formian cask,
Of flocks, high-fed on Gallic leas,
No tribute fleece I ask.

For, larger than my wishes are,
Your bounty keeps me free from want;
Contented thus, I'm richer far,
Although my means be scant,

Than if I craved Mygdonian fields
To Lydia join'd: who covets aught
Lacks all: 'tis well, where Fortune yields
Enough, the rest is nought.

BOOK III. O. 19.

You give the dates from Inachus
  To Codrus, who for Athens died with joy,
You count the race of Æacus
  And all their fights beneath the walls of Troy;
But if the price of Chian's up,
  Where house-room may be had, where baths are hot,
The important hour at which we sup,
  Shut in from Samnite blasts, you mention not.
Here, boy, be quick; serve round the wine:
  The New-Moon—midnight next—Muræna now,
Our Augur; friends, with three in nine,
  Or nine in three, shall bowl and goblet flow:

Thrice three each poet will demand,
  Thrice three, they cry, in the sweet Muse's name:
The naked Graces, hand in hand,
  By use and wont, the three remaining claim,
Lest quarrels mar good-fellowship.
  Madcap's the game; O Berecynthian flute
Hath music ceased from every lip?
  Against the wall why droop ye, harp and lute?
Down on our heads, sweet Flora, shake
  Thy rosy shower, close-fisted ways I hate;
Let shout and song old Lycus wake,
  Old Lycus and his ill-assorted mate.
Telephus, be glad; your cluster'd hair,
  Your earnest eyes, that Hesperus outshine,
Are blooming Rhoda's fondest care:
  To feed my Glycera's languid flame is mine.

BOOK III. O. 23.

If, at new-moon, with palms supine
  Before the rustic Lar thou stand,
  With incense, first-fruits of the land,
And flesh of sacrificial swine,

No sterile blight thy crop shall sear,
  No Afric blast dry up thy vine,
  Nor shall thy tender lambkins pine,
When sickness wastes the falling year.

For, pastured on the Alban plain,
  Or fed on Algid's snowy sides,
  Mid woods of oak, the victim bides,
Whose blood the Pontiff's axe shall stain.

Thy humble Gods, my Phidylë,
  Such costly sacrifice disown,
  They more affect the myrtle-crown
And sprigs of fragrant rosemary.

To purge thee of each venial fault,
  If thou approach with cleansed hands,
  No other gift the Lar demands,
But pious meal and crackling salt.

BOOK IV. O. 4.

Him, on whose flights of youthful song
  Thou look'dst, Melpomene, with favour erst,
Although he strive not with the strong
  In Isthmian contests, nor aspire the first
With panting steed to reach the goal;
  Although he boast no battles nobly fought,
Nor mount the lofty Capitol [nought
  With Victory crown'd, as one who brings to
The boastful threats of foreign kings:—
  Him, every tree on Tibur's fertile sward,
Him Anio, with the hundred springs,
  Applauding hail, their well-accustom'd bard.

Throughout Imperial Rome to-day
  My countrymen, with one accord, proclaim
These temples worthy of the bay,
  And tongue-tied envy hangs her head for shame.
O Muse, endow'd with heavenly skill
  To draw sweet numbers from the golden lute,
Who can'st bestow, if such thy will,
  The swan's death-melody on fishes mute,
'Tis all thy gift: that passers by
  Point at the warbler of their favorite lays,
That still I sing beneath the sky,
  And please, if please I can, be thine the praise.

BOOK IV. O. 5.

O noble bulwark of Imperial Rome,
  Heaven's choicest gift, too long art thou away;
Redeem thy promise, to the Senate come,
    They grieve at each delay.

Bring back, O Chief, the people's wonted light;
  Thy presence is like spring-time to the land,
For, where thou art, the sun is doubly bright,
    The days are doubly bland.

As some fond mother, when the Southern breeze
    Detains her sailor-son with envious blast
Wind-bound from home, amid Carpathian seas,
    Till all the year be past,

Calls on his name, with omen, prayer and vow;
For ever turning towards the landing-place;
With equal longing doth the country now
Yearn for her Cæsar's face.

The ox securely fattens in the fields;
Our happy fields with peace and plenty crown'd;
The sea to merchantships free passage yields,
All men by faith are bound.

No spurious loves pollute the marriage-bed,
Disorder shrinks, by law and custom tamed;
The father's features in the child are bred,
Ill deeds are quickly shamed.

Our Cæsar lives; away with groundless fears
Of warlike Scyth, or Parthian of the plain;
Who dreads the savage hordes Germania rears,
Or broils of distant Spain?

Now all day long our native hills we range,
  Or teach the vine round widow'd elms to trail;
Then home, to sup; and, as the courses change,
    Thy glorious name we hail.

With full libations and with daily prayers,
  Thee and our Lares we adore in one;
So did the Greeks Alcides join with theirs,
    And Leda's valiant son.

Live long, great Prince, in Italy to reign!
  This boon at morn with fasting lips we crave;
Nor less, at feasts, when Sol goes down again
    Beneath the Western-wave.

BOOK IV. O. 7.

The snows are gone; our wooded mountain sides,
Our grassy fields are green.
Earth claims her own; the shrunken torrent glides
Its quiet banks between.
Graces and Nymphs, unzoned, no longer fear
To mingle in the dance;
Yet days and hours that fill the circling year
Warn us of life's advance.
Frosts yield to Zephyrs; summer chases spring;
Brief summer's flowery reign
Dies out, and autumn-moons their harvest bring;
Then winter comes again.

And so their endless round the seasons keep:
    But we, if once we fall
Where good Æneas, Tullus, Ancus sleep,
    Are dust and shadows all.
Who knows how long to each recurring day
    A morrow shall accrue?
Live freely, then, be happy while you may,
    Your heir will have his due.
Once dead,—alas! Torquatus, if thou bear
    The brand of Minos' curse,
Can race, or eloquence, or pious prayer
    The fiery doom reverse?
Not Dian's self the chaste Hippolytus
    From Hades could obtain,
Nor Theseus' tears release Pirithous
    From his Lethæan chain.

BOOK IV. O. 9.

Lest haply thou suppose that I,
By brawling Aufidus, invent
Mere jingling words for music meant,
Brief fancies, only born to die;

Mind, though great Homer sits alone,
Yet Pindar's flights, Alcæus' fire,
The finish of the Cean's lyre,
Without disdain the Muses own.

Still grave Stesichorus we praise,
Still drink to gay Anacreon's lute,
And passion's self is never mute,
For Love still breathes in Sappho's lays.

Deem not that Helen singly errs,
By love-locks drawn, and airs of court,
Nay, rich attire and lordly port
Have turn'd a score of heads like hers.

Not Teucer from the Cretan bow
First sped the shaft; not once for all
Troy fell; not Sthenelus, nor tall
Idomeneus first struck a blow

That might have stamp'd their name in song;
Not Hector nor Deiphobus
First fronted death, ensampling us,
To shelter wife and child from wrong.

Brave men before Atrides warr'd,
Nor few; yet these, unwept, unknown,
Went down to dark Oblivion,
For lack of one heaven-gifted bard.

Small difference lies 'twixt worth obscure
And buried sloth. My glowing page,
O Lollius, from age to age,
Gracing and graced by deeds so pure,

Shall scare base envy from the fame
Her breath would sully. Thine a soul
In wisdom poised and self-controul,
Through good and evil chance the same.

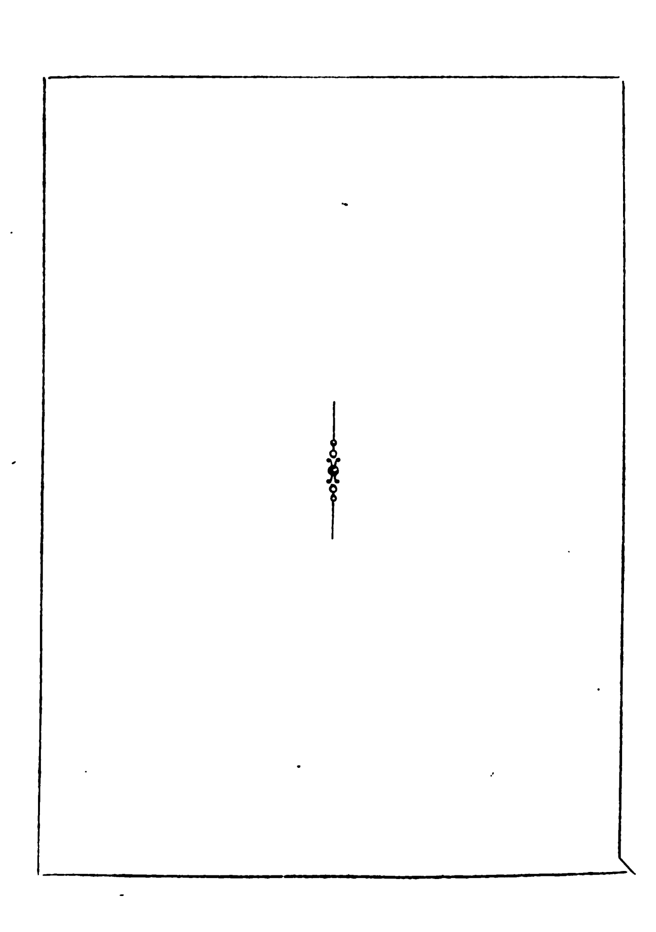
Rebuker, thou, of greedy fraud,
Contemner of enticing gear,
No consul of a single year,
But ever, where a just award

Sets Right above Expedience,
Where loftiness puts by the bribes
Of evil men, through clamorous tribes
Thou winn'st thy way in innocence.

'Tis not the lord of wide domain
  Whom rightly we can surname blest,
  But rather he, who uses best
Whatever means the Gods ordain,

Whose virtue is temptation-proof,
  Whose patience lightens poverty;
  Such natures hold their life in fee
For friends' and country's dear behoof.





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